

**NCATE/State Partnership Protocol
for
INITIAL/CONTINUING/PROBATION REVIEWS
of Professional Education Units in the State of South Carolina seeking NCATE
accreditation**

Team Composition:
Joint

Program Review:
NCATE-Based

Effective:
Jan. 2006 - Dec. 2012

Original Partnership Agreement Date: 1995

[I. Standards](#) [II. Team](#) [III. Preparation](#) [IV. On-Site Review](#)
[V. After On-Site Review](#) [VI. On-Going Responsibilities](#)

Category	NCATE policy & options	State additions/response
I. Standards		
A. Unit Standards	<p>NCATE unit standards apply to the professional education unit.</p> <p>Specific State criteria, as determined by the State Agency, and institutional criteria as determined by the institution or higher education commission, may also be applied to units and/or programs being reviewed by NCATE and the State.</p>	<p>National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standards apply to the professional education unit. State Department of Education (SDE) standards will also apply to the unit. Commission of Higher Education (CHE) standards will apply to programs, usually at the graduate level, that do not lead to initial certification for public education units.</p>
B. NCATE Program Standards	<p>NCATE coordinates program reviews by specialized professional associations (SPAs) with program standards that have been approved by the Specialty Areas Studies Board.</p> <p>NCATE accepts the</p>	<p>Program review documents are submitted to NCATE. Results of NCATE/Specialized Professional Associations (SPAs) are sent to Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs), SDE, and</p>

Category	NCATE policy & options	State additions/response
	<p>decisions of applicable institutional accrediting agencies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation as evidence of program content quality.</p>	<p>CHE at the same time they are submitted to NCATE.</p> <p>Program reports will be handled as follows:</p> <p>For programs for which NCATE does not coordinate program reviews, units will submit program reports to SDE.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Programs such as Family and Consumer Science and Agriculture which result in certification shall submit program reports as directed by SDE. 2. For public education units, programs for which specialized accreditation is available must submit their self-studies in the format prescribed by the accrediting body, regardless of whether the program is accredited. 3. For public education units, other programs shall complete self-studies as directed by CHE. 4. Program reports

Category	NCATE policy & options	State additions/response
		shall be submitted for review to SDE 6 to 12 months prior to the visit. Self-studies for public education units shall be submitted to CHE 6 to 12 months prior to the visit.
II. Team		
A. Team Composition: Joint NCATE/ State Team	The NCATE team is selected from NCATE’s Board of Examiners (BOE). The team includes representatives from organizations of teacher educators, teachers, education specialists and/or policy makers. Non-voting members of the team include the State Consultant (usually the NCATE State Partnership Contact, or his/her designee), and a representative from the state affiliate of NEA and/or AFT. Team assignments are systematically made to ensure that conflicts of interest are avoided. The NCATE team sends its findings to NCATE and the State Consultant.	<p>SDE appoints at least two members to the joint team from the pool of individuals who have been trained by NCATE/State personnel in the NCATE system and State program approval.</p> <p>CHE appoints a team member trained in the NCATE Board Of Examiner (BOE) system to serve on the joint team to review public education units.</p> <p>SDE appointed team members and CHE team members may not have conflicts of interest based on NCATE’s criteria with the exception that SDE appointees may be from the same state.</p> <p>All members of the team are writing and voting members.</p>

Category	NCATE policy & options	State additions/response
		NCATE teams send their findings to the CHE consultant as well as to NCATE and SDE consultant(s) for public education units.
B. Training Expectations: Joint	<p>NCATE team members must participate in the NCATE-sponsored BOE training.</p> <p>State team members must be trained by NCATE staff or an NCATE authorized trainee, as outlined in the State rules.</p>	<p>State team members (including CHE team member(s)) participate in a workshop on NCATE and SDE system that is conducted by NCATE.</p>
C. Team Size: Joint	<p>For first, continuing, and probation visits, the BOE team will include 3-6 members depending on several factors, including the number of candidates, faculty, and the unit's programs. Additional team members may be added to visit off-campus sites.</p> <p>For focused visits, the team will include 2-3 BOE members.</p>	<p>SDE appointees to the joint team shall be one fewer in number than NCATE appointees.</p> <p>CHE appoints a team member to the joint team to review public education units. CHE team member is trained in NCATE /BOE procedures.</p> <p>SDE appoints members to the joint team from the pool of individuals who have successfully completed State/NCATE BOE training or NCATE BOE training.</p>
D. Chair Responsibilities: Joint	<p>The NCATE chairperson and the State chairperson serve as co-chairs. They are jointly responsible for planning and conducting the visit.</p>	<p>CHE and SDE must approve the co-chair of BOE joint teams for visits to public education units. SDE must approve the</p>

Category	NCATE policy & options	State additions/response
	<p>The co-chairs conduct a previsit approximately 60 days before the visit to plan interviews and finalize the logistics for the visit. The State Consultant and State team chair should participate in the previsit.</p> <p>The co-chairs assign roles and responsibilities to BOE and State team members.</p>	<p>chair for private units.</p> <p>CHE team members will work closely with co-chairs throughout the review of public education units.</p> <p>The date for the pre-visit is arranged in consultation with NCATE co-chair, SDE co-chair, and CHE. The co-chairs and consultants from SDE and CHE will attend the previsit.</p>
<p>E. Consultants/Other Participants</p>	<p>NCATE invites the State education agencies to appoint a “State Consultant” to advise the team on State requirements, nomenclature, and special circumstances. The State Consultant’s expenses are covered by the respective agency. The State Consultant facilitates an orientation to the State Partnership at a team meeting prior to the review activities. The consultant is usually the State Partnership Contact, but may be his/her designee, and is a non-voting member of the BOE team. The State Consultant may serve as a voting member of the State team, if so designated by the State. A few states (e.g., SC and</p>	<p>One or more consultants from SDE and for public units from CHE will work with the joint team visiting public education units.</p> <p>Expenses for the consultants are covered by the respective agencies.</p>

Category	NCATE policy & options	State additions/response
	FL) may have consultants from two agencies.	
F. NEA/AFT Representatives	<p>NCATE invites the State affiliates of the NEA and AFT to appoint observers for the on-site visit in partnership States. The participants' respective agencies are responsible for their travel and maintenance expenses.</p> <p>These observers can assist the BOE team with the collection of data, interviews, and the editing of the team report. However, they should not be assigned a primary writing assignment. Observers are non-voting members of the BOE team.</p>	
G. Decision-making	<p>Decisions are usually made through consensus-driving discussions of whether standards are met. When consensus cannot be reached, a vote may be taken.</p>	<p>For initial and continuing visits, SDE and CHE team appointees vote on unit standards for NCATE.</p> <p>For continuing visits, SDE and CHE consultants as well as team members assist the team in collecting evidence and participate in the deliberations for the BOE report. SDE consultants are available to clarify and answer questions but do not influence decisions.</p>

Category	NCATE policy & options	State additions/response
<p>H. Writing the Report: Joint</p>	<p>The NCATE chair assigns writing responsibilities to each team member. The BOE report includes the BOE team’s responses to the 6 unit standards at both the initial teacher preparation and advanced levels as appropriate. If the State or institution has additional requirements, the report should have the BOE team’s responses to the State/Institution requirements attached as a Report Addendum. The final report is compiled by the BOE chair.</p> <p>The NCATE and State chairs assign primary and secondary writing responsibilities to both NCATE and State team members.</p> <p>The draft of the BOE report should be completed by the end of the on-site visit.</p> <p>The BOE draft report should be sent to NCATE and the team members for editing, and to the unit for correction of factual errors.</p> <p>The BOE team chair e-mails one copy of the final report to the NCATE office and a copy to each member of the NCATE</p>	<p>BOE report serves as SDE report and is submitted to SDE’s Professional Review Committee (PRC).</p> <p>Programs not in compliance with the standards of the SPAs, national accrediting bodies or SDE at the time of the visit will be listed as areas for improvement in the BOE team report.</p> <p>Public IHE programs not in compliance will also be given provisional approval by CHE until the standards are met.</p> <p>For initial and continuing visits, CHE team appointees will prepare a report for submission to CHE.</p> <p>BOE team co-chair e-mails the draft report to SDE and CHE consultants within 30 days following the visit.</p>

Category	NCATE policy & options	State additions/response
	team within 30 days following the visit.	
I. Evaluations	Following the on-site visit, the performance of BOE members is evaluated electronically by the unit, the other national and State BOE members, and State consultants who served on the same visiting team. The evaluations are used by NCATE and the State to determine who should continue BOE service and to identify potential team chairs.	Results of the electronic evaluations of State BOE members are used by the State to determine who should continue BOE service and to identify potential team chairs.
J. Expenses	During the semester of the visit, the unit will pay NCATE a Periodic Evaluation Fee of \$1,000 per NCATE BOE team member participating in the on-site visit.	SDE covers all expenses for its team members and consultants. CHE covers all expenses for its team members and consultants.
III. Preparation		
A. Units' Intent-to-Seek request	For initial accreditation, at least two years before hosting an on-site visit, the unit should indicate its interest in seeking accreditation. The request should include the semester and year in which the unit plans to host the on-site review.	SDE/CHE must approve the visitation dates prior to submission to NCATE.
B. NCATE materials	In response to interest request, NCATE provides weblinks to the following materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Standards for the Accreditation of Schools, Colleges, and Departments of 	Education units must adhere to State standards. These standards are on the Web at http://www.sctechners.org/educate/edpdf/scprepstandards.pdf .

Category	NCATE policy & options	State additions/response
	<p>Education;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handbook for Accreditation Visits; • “Intent to Seek NCATE accreditation” form – TO BE SUBMITTED 2 YEARS BEFORE THE VISIT; • Timeline for semester and year of visit; • List of NCATE partnership States; and <p>Other accreditation information</p>	<p>A list of approved programs will be verified by SDE and CHE and provided to the unit one year prior to the visit.</p>
<p>C. Preconditions</p>	<p>For first visits, the unit responds to the preconditions found on the NCATE website. The preconditions report must be submitted to the NCATE office at least eighteen months prior to the on-site visit.</p> <p>All accredited units <i>must continue to meet the preconditions</i> for continued NCATE accreditation. Annually, NCATE reviews Title II test data and will request additional information from the unit that no longer meets the required State pass rate.</p>	<p>One copy of NCATE’s response to preconditions is submitted to CHE (for public units) and to SDE one year prior to on-site visit.</p> <p>For units undergoing their first performance based accreditation visit, preconditions are due to SDE 18 months prior to the on-site visit.</p> <p>SDE’s response to preconditions from private education units are given to the State Board of Education 6 months to one year prior to the on-site visit. Preconditions are found on the NCATE Web site (www.ncate.org/institu)</p>

Category	NCATE policy & options	State additions/response
		<p>tions/faqPrecondition.asp).</p> <p>The preconditions report with the exception of program reports for precondition #8 must be submitted to the NCATE office at least eighteen months prior to the on-site visit.</p>
<p>D. Program Reports</p>	<p>If the Partnership Agreement requires the unit is required to submit program reports, it must submit them by February 1 or September 15, three semesters before the continuing visit.</p> <p>For a continuing visit, NCATE requests the unit to verify online their “Status of Program Reviews,” approximately two years before the visit. This information will indicate which program reports to submit.</p> <p>For specific information on the preparation of program reports visit the NCATE website.</p>	<p>Programs that are not reviewed by a specialized national accrediting agency and do not lead to certification prepare program reports as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) If there is a national specialized accrediting agency, then the unit must submit its self studies in the format prescribed by the accrediting body, regardless of whether the program is accredited. 2) For programs at public IHEs without a SPA or national accrediting body, the unit completes a CHE self-study. 3) Program reports are due two semesters before the visit by February 1 or September 15. 4) For initial certification, education units seeking

Category	NCATE policy & options	State additions/response
		<p>NCATE/State approval will prepare program reports for areas for which there is no SPA, or national accrediting body, based on the Program Standards for Teacher Education Programs in South Carolina IHEs www.scteachers.org/educate/programstand.cfm) two semesters prior to the accrediting visit on September 15 or February 1.</p> <p>Units seeking continued accreditation will submit program reports for which there is no SPA or national accrediting body, based on the Program Standards for Teacher Education www.scteachers.org/educate/programstand.cfm) two semesters before the visit on September 15 or February 1.</p>
E. Institutional Report	The professional education unit is required to write and submit an Institutional Report (IR) that describes the unit's conceptual framework and evidence that demonstrates that the 6 standards are met. In continuing accreditation	Concurrent with submission of the Institutional Report (IR) to NCATE, the unit submits two copies of its IR and catalogs to SDE, and, for public IHEs, also two copies to CHE (60 days prior to the visit).

Category	NCATE policy & options	State additions/response
	<p>visits, the IR also serves as a primary documentation of the unit's growth and development since the last accreditation visit.</p> <p>The unit sends one copy of the IR and related links to undergraduate and graduate (if applicable) catalogs to each NCATE BOE team member, State consultant, and NEA/AFT observers. Either an electronic copy of the Institutional Report is sent to NCATE, or the unit may send two paper copies.</p>	
<p>F. Dates of On-Site Visit</p>	<p>NCATE requests units to submit its preferred visit date to NCATE at least 1 year prior to the on-site visit. Units in Partnership States must have the date approved by the State Agency prior to submitting its request to NCATE.</p> <p>The State Agency must first agree to requests for a delay in the visit, before submitting the delay request to NCATE.</p> <p>Visits are scheduled from Saturday through Wednesday excepting special circumstances.</p>	<p>Specific dates for site visits must be selected in consultation with SDE and CHE prior to submission to NCATE.</p> <p>If a unit requests a delay, a letter must be sent to the PRC stating the reason a delay is needed. PRC considers the request and the oral presentation made by the unit representatives. Information is sent to the State Board of Education for a final decision.</p>
<p>G. Previsit</p>	<p>The previsit should be</p>	<p>The co-chair, who is</p>

Category	NCATE policy & options	State additions/response
	<p>scheduled about 60 days before the on-site visit. See the <i>Handbook for Accreditation Visits</i> for further details.</p> <p>The State Consultant, BOE chair, head of the unit, and NCATE coordinator should be present. If the visit is joint or concurrent, the State team chair should also participate in the previsit.</p>	<p>the team member appointed by SDE, and SDE and CHE consultants (for public education units) meet with NCATE co-chair and the unit head to plan the visit.</p>
<p>H. 3rd Party Testimony</p>	<p>Six months before the on-site review, the unit must publish a “Call for Comment” inviting 3rd party testimony related to the upcoming NCATE visit to be sent to NCATE.</p> <p>Two to three months before the on-site review, NCATE sends copies of any third-party testimony it received to the unit for comment and to the BOE team chair.</p>	<p>For private education units seeking SDE approval, third party testimony related to the visit will be sent to SDE.</p>
<p>IV. On-Site Review</p>		
<p>A. Orientation to State Process/ Protocol</p>	<p>If the visit is being conducted jointly or concurrently, the State Consultant (or his/her designee) will facilitate an orientation to the State process and Protocol.</p>	
<p>B. Conducting the On-Site Review</p>	<p>The NCATE template for on-site visits guides the conduct of the visit as outlined in the <i>NCATE Handbook for Accreditation Visits</i> and on the NCATE website.</p>	<p>SDE co-chair and CHE appointee and/or consultant participate in the NCATE co-chair’s planning meeting prior to the Sunday team</p>

Category	NCATE policy & options	State additions/response
		<p>meeting.</p> <p>The team appointee for CHE submits a report to CHE, which includes evaluation of those programs for which no program review process exists.</p>
<p>C. Evidence/Exhibit Room</p>	<p>Electronic exhibit rooms are encouraged. Access NCATE’s electronic exhibit room guidelines.</p> <p>Performance-based evidence that demonstrates what candidates know and are able to do must be included in the exhibit room. Units must provide data from:</p> <p>1) assessments at admissions; 2) State licensure tests; 3) internship assessments; and 4) follow-up studies. For other assessment data examples, see “Assessing Education Candidate Performance: A Look at Changing Practices.”</p>	
<p>D. BOE Report</p>	<p>The BOE report includes the BOE team’s responses to the 6 unit standards at both the initial teacher preparation and advanced levels as appropriate. If the State/Institution has additional requirements, the report should have the BOE team’s responses to</p>	<p>Documentation of state standards should be embedded within the joint BOE document.</p>

Category	NCATE policy & options	State additions/response
	<p>the State requirements attached as a State Addendum. The final report is compiled by the BOE chair.</p> <p>The BOE team chair e-mails one copy of the final BOE Report to the NCATE office and a copy to each member of the NCATE team within 30 days following the visit.</p>	
E. Exit Conference	<p>An exit conference is conducted before the team departs Wednesday. It is conducted by the NCATE team chair, State team chair, and State Consultants. The unit is represented by the unit head and coordinator of the NCATE review; the president and/or provost may also attend.</p>	<p>As a result of the preliminary findings, BOE committee appointees may reflect on programmatic highlights during the exit conference. SDE and CHE consultants as well as team co-chairs and CHE and SDE team appointee(s) may participate in the exit conference.</p> <p>NCATE BOE co-chair will leave a brief written preliminary finding with the unit head.</p>
V. After the On-Site Review		
A. BOE report sent from NCATE	<p>NCATE mails two copies of the report to the unit and one copy to the appropriate State Agencies.</p>	<p>One copy of the joint BOE report is submitted to SDE and CHE.</p>
B. Rejoinder	<p>The unit submits to NCATE and the State an</p>	<p>The unit submits three copies of its rejoinder</p>

Category	NCATE policy & options	State additions/response
	<p>electronic copy, or five hard copies, of its rejoinder to the BOE report within 30 days after receipt of the BOE Report.</p>	<p>to SDE and (for public units) two copies to CHE within 30 days of the receipt of the BOE report.</p>
<p>C. Accreditation & Approval</p>	<p>NCATE's Unit Accreditation Board (UAB) is responsible for determining the accreditation status of professional education units, during meetings twice a year. In most cases, accreditation decisions are rendered at the UAB meeting in the semester that follows the BOE review.</p> <p>NCATE provides written notice of all accreditation decisions to the U.S. Department of Education, the appropriate state licensing or authorizing agency, all institutional accrediting agencies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, and the public (via the NCATE website).</p> <p>More information about reporting accreditation decisions may be found in NCATE's Policies on Dissemination of Information. Definitions of NCATE accreditation decisions can also be found on NCATE's website, or in the</p>	

Category	NCATE policy & options	State additions/response
	Handbook for Accreditation Visits.	
D. Final Action Report	Within 30 days after NCATE's Unit Accreditation Board takes action on the accreditation of the unit, NCATE sends the chief executive officer and head of the professional education unit a letter that indicates the official action.	<p>SDE's PRC meets to review a summary of findings based on information contained in the BOE Report, program reviews, and rejoinders. The PRC recommends accreditation; accreditation with conditions; accreditation with probation; or revocation of accreditation for each unit. The recommendation is forwarded to the State Board of Education for action. A final report of the program approval status is sent to the unit by the SDE; one copy is forwarded to NCATE and for public education units, two copies are forwarded to CHE.</p> <p>CHE will review all findings and rejoinders and determine appropriate action with respect to full approval; provisional approval; or termination of programs.</p>
E. Appeal Procedure	Units may appeal any of the following Unit Accreditation Board	SDE has an appeals process that is outlined in the Policy

Category	NCATE policy & options	State additions/response
	<p>decisions: Provisional Accreditation, Accreditation with Conditions, Revocation of Accreditation, and Probation. See NCATE's website for specific policies and procedures related to the appeals process.</p>	<p>Guidelines document (www.scteachers.org/educate/rulesregs.cfm).</p>
<p>VI. On-Going Responsibilities</p>		
<p>A. Protocol Distribution</p>	<p>NCATE will post the State Partnership Protocol on its website; it is also available in hard copy upon request. States will distribute the protocol to all units following the creation/renewal of a Partnership or after either party makes revisions.</p>	<p>The SDE protocol is posted on the Web at (http://www.scteachers.org/educate/unitstand.cfm).</p>
<p>B. Accreditation Cycle</p>	<p>Units that receive accreditation for the first time will be scheduled for their next visit five years from the semester in which their visit occurred.</p> <p>Units that receive continuing accreditation will be scheduled for their next visit seven years from the semester in which their visit occurred. The seven-year cycle of visits apply only if the State has agreed to a seven-year cycle.</p> <p>Units may host a probationary or focused visit as a result of conditional, or provisional</p>	<p>Units in the State of South Carolina move to a seven-year cycle after the first continuing accreditation review.</p> <p>SDE and, for public institutions, CHE will participate in probational,</p>

Category	NCATE policy & options	State additions/response
	<p>accreditation; visits will be within 2 years of the UAB's decision.</p>	<p>conditional, or provisional reviews, as needed.</p>
<p>C. Code of Conduct</p>	<p>To assure units and the public that NCATE reviews are impartial and objective, to avoid conflicts of interest, and to promote equity and high ethical standards in the accreditation system, BOE members, board members, program reviewers, and staff shall follow NCATE's Code of Conduct, in the Handbook for Accreditation Visits and on NCATE's website.</p> <p>Violation of any part of the Code of Conduct could result in the board member's removal from the board.</p>	<p>All team appointees, consultants and observers must be informed in writing of NCATE's Code of Conduct. All team appointees are expected to adhere to this code.</p>
<p>D. Annual Reviews</p>		
<p>1. Regional Accreditation</p>	<p>Units must maintain regional accreditation in order to continue its NCATE accreditation.</p>	<p>The unit must maintain its regional accreditation.</p>
<p>2. Change in State Status</p>	<p>The State will provide to NCATE its policy leading to a "Change in State Status."</p> <p>The State will notify NCATE within thirty days of action taken that an NCATE unit has had a Change in State Status.</p> <p>Notification of an NCATE accredited unit's Change in State Status by the State will initiate a review</p>	

Category	NCATE policy & options	State additions/response
	<p>by NCATE's <i>Annual Report and Preconditions Audit Committee</i>.</p> <p>The NCATE president will notify the unit that the State has informed NCATE of a change in their state status and require the unit to submit a special report within 90 days.</p>	
3. Precondition 7	<p>The unit's programs are approved by the appropriate State agency or agencies, and, in States with educator licensing examinations and required pass rates, the unit's summary pass rate meets or exceeds the required State pass rate.</p>	<p>South Carolina requires an 80% pass rate to meet precondition #7.</p>
4. Annual Report	<p>Submission of the Annual Report is a requirement for all units that are accredited by NCATE or are candidates or precandidates for NCATE accreditation. Annual Reports are due October 1st and should be submitted electronically.</p>	<p>All units shall submit one copy of their AACTE(American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education)/NCATE annual report to SDE and for all public education units to CHE by July 1st.</p>